United States Patent [19]

Bezick et al.

[54] **VIDEO GAME COMPETITION METHOD AND APPARATUS**

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[52] U.S. Cl. **463/42**

[58] **Field of Search** 463/40, 41, 42, 463/43; 348/13, 461, 553, 571, 725; 386/46, 52; 380/10, 20; 455/3.1, 4.1, 4.2
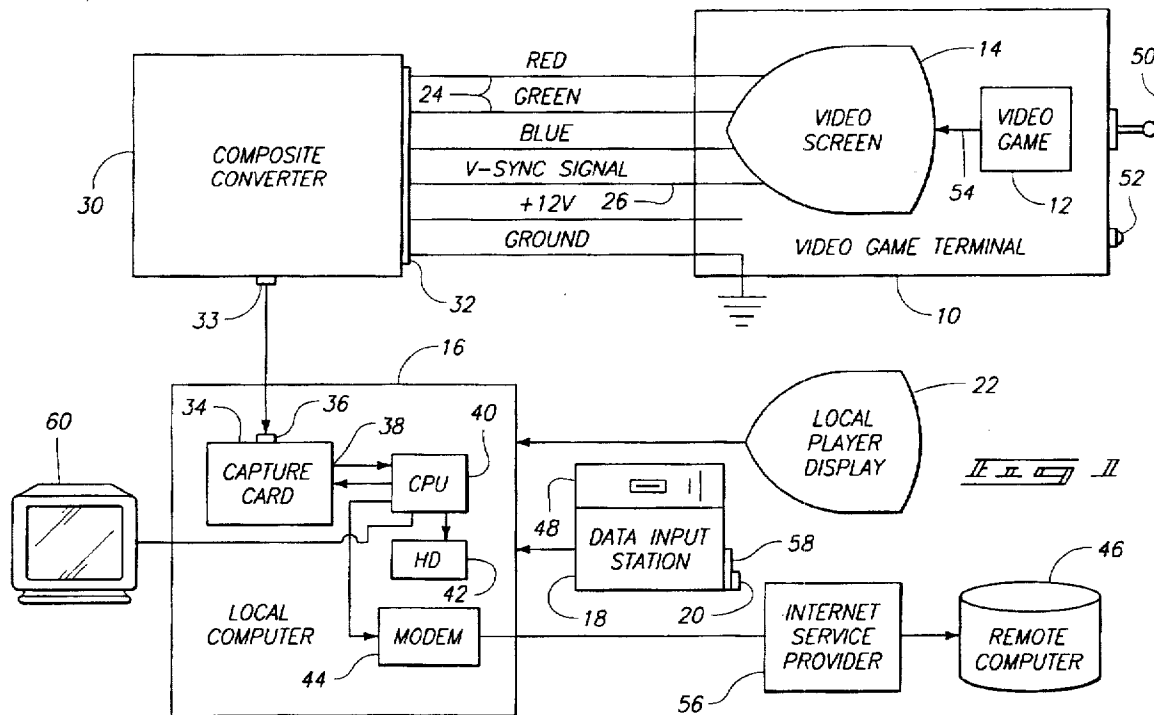
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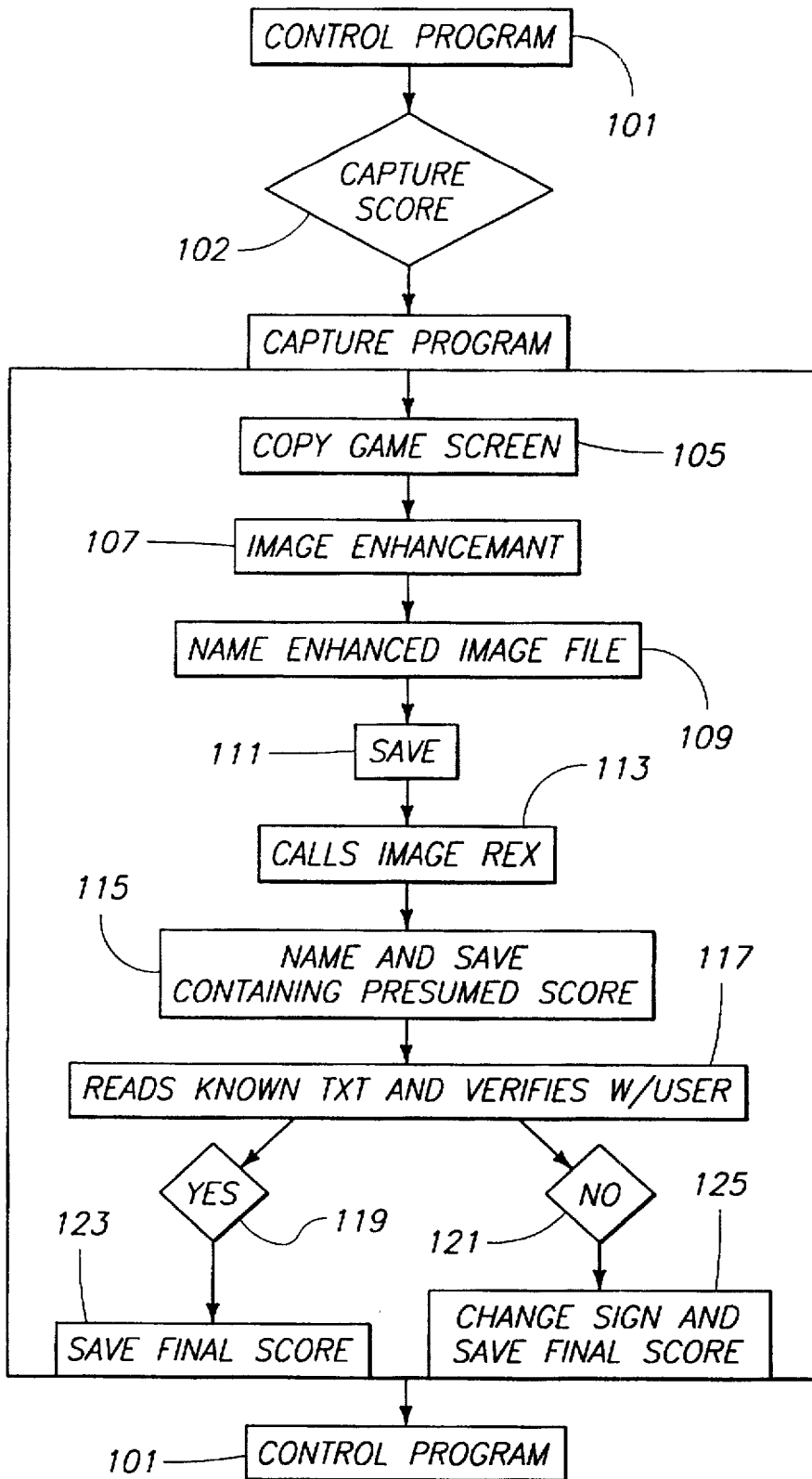|			
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

An apparatus for video game tournament competition receives as its input the RGB signal to the video game screen which contains the final score obtained by the contestant. The RGB signal is directed to a composite converter where the signal is converted to a format which may be captured to a file, which file can then be processed by a computer. The composite converter sends its output signal to a video capture circuit which will capture the instantaneous image displayed on the video game screen which will contain the final game score. The capture circuit produces a captured video file which may then be processed by character recognition software in a local computer located at the site of the video game to extract the final game score in alphanumeric form from the captured video file. The score may then be sent to a remote computer which will collect a plurality of scores and at the end of the tournament determine the high score. The apparatus also provides a data input station for potential tournament players to enter personal information and payment to engage in the tournament. Player information is also transmitted to the remote computer. When the high score from a tournament is determined the associated player information is correlated with the score and the score is transmitted to all locales at which video game terminals are present which engaged in the tournament. A local player display is connected to the local computer for prompting players and potential contestants and for providing other useful information to contestants. The character recognition program compares a template unique to the video game against the captured video file to identify characters in the captured video file which represent the final game score.
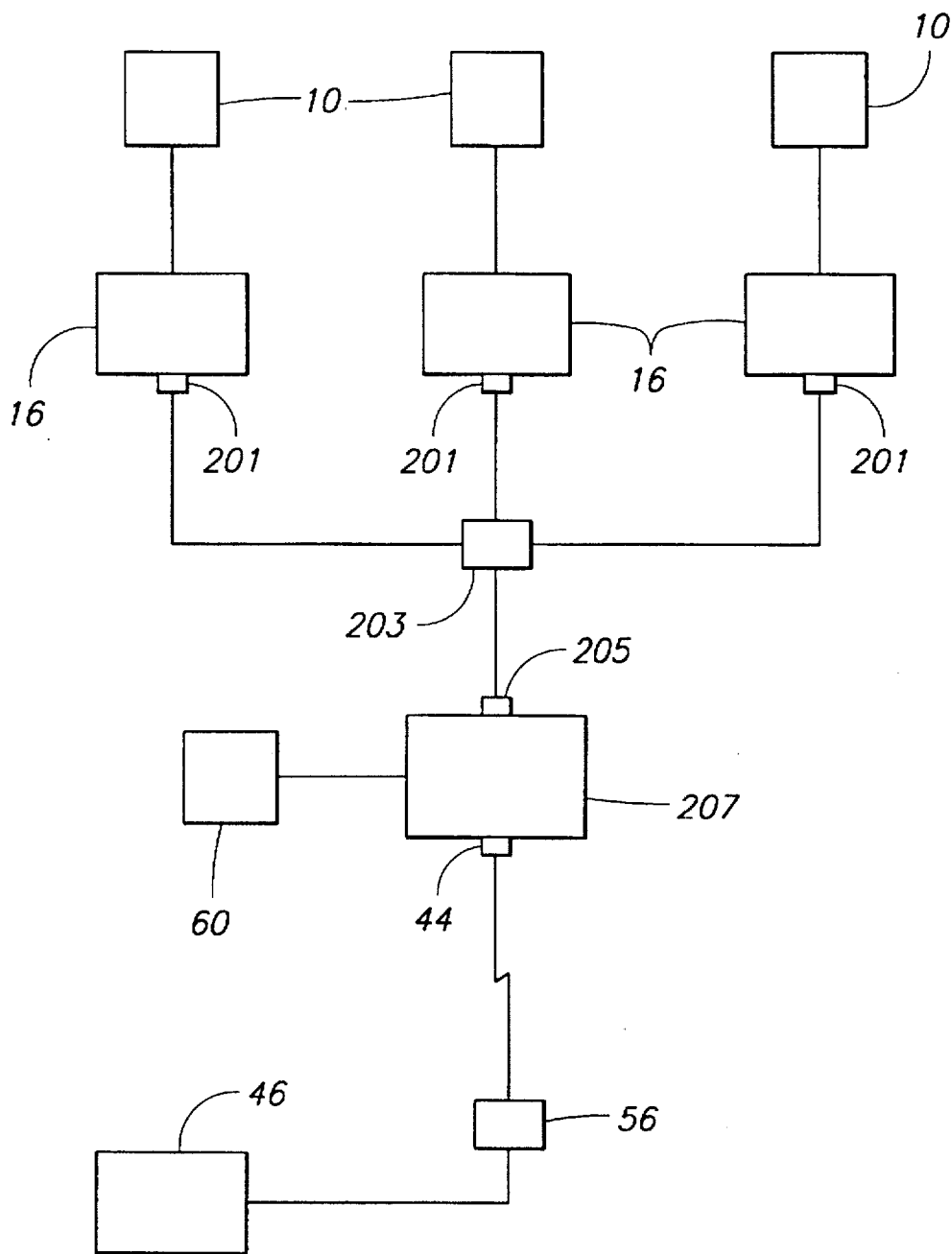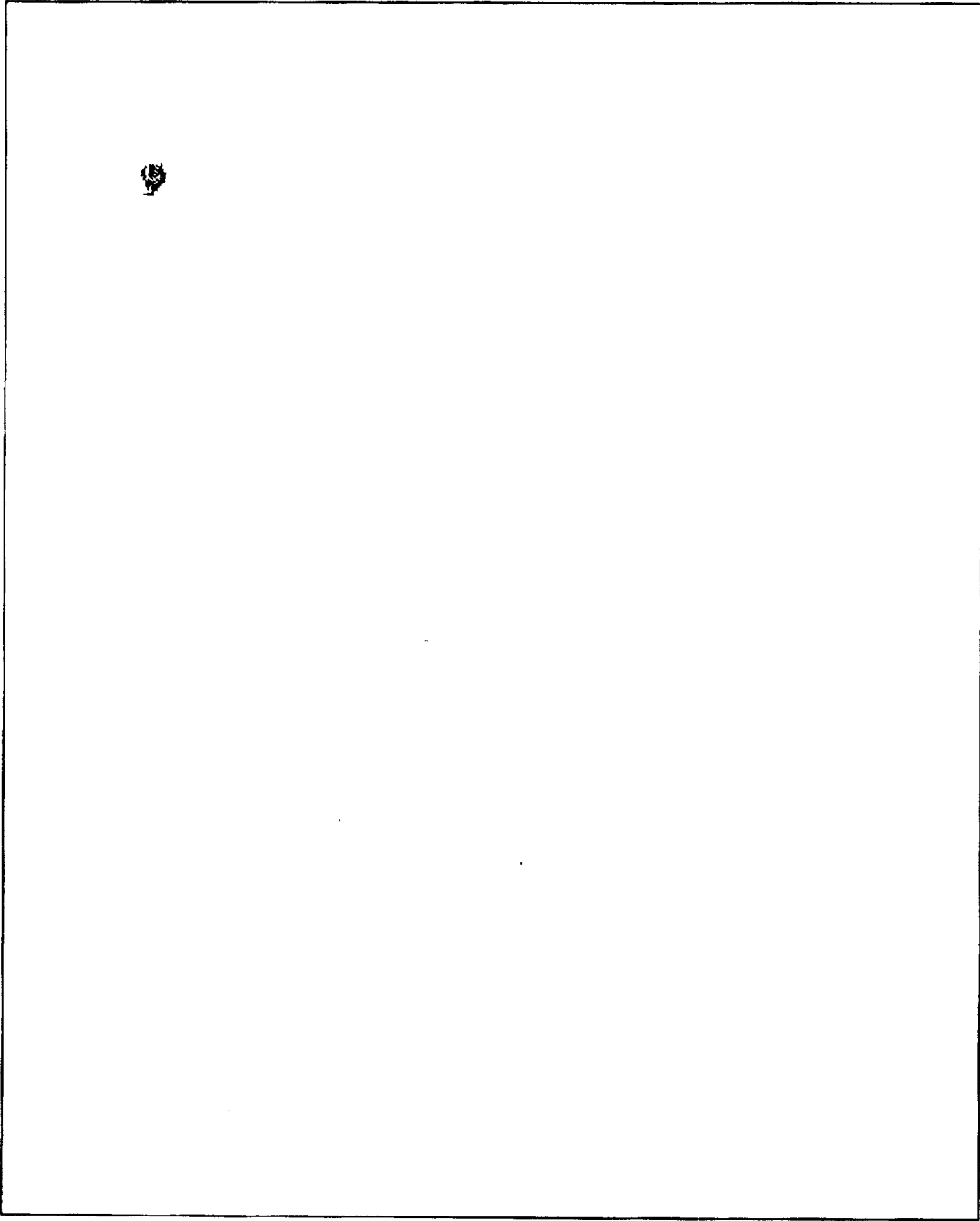
27 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets

CONTROL PROGRAM

101

CAPTURE SCORE

102

CAPTURE PROGRAM

COPY GAME SCREEN — 105

107 — IMAGE ENHANCEMANT

NAME ENHANCED IMAGE FILE

109

111 — SAVE

113

CALLS IMAGE REX

115

NAME AND SAVE CONTAINING PRESUMED SCORE

117

READS KNOWN TXT AND VERIFIES W/USER

YES

119

NO

125

123

121

SAVE FINAL SCORE

CHANGE SIGN AND SAVE FINAL SCORE

101 — CONTROL PROGRAM

FIG 2

FIG. 3

Fig. 4
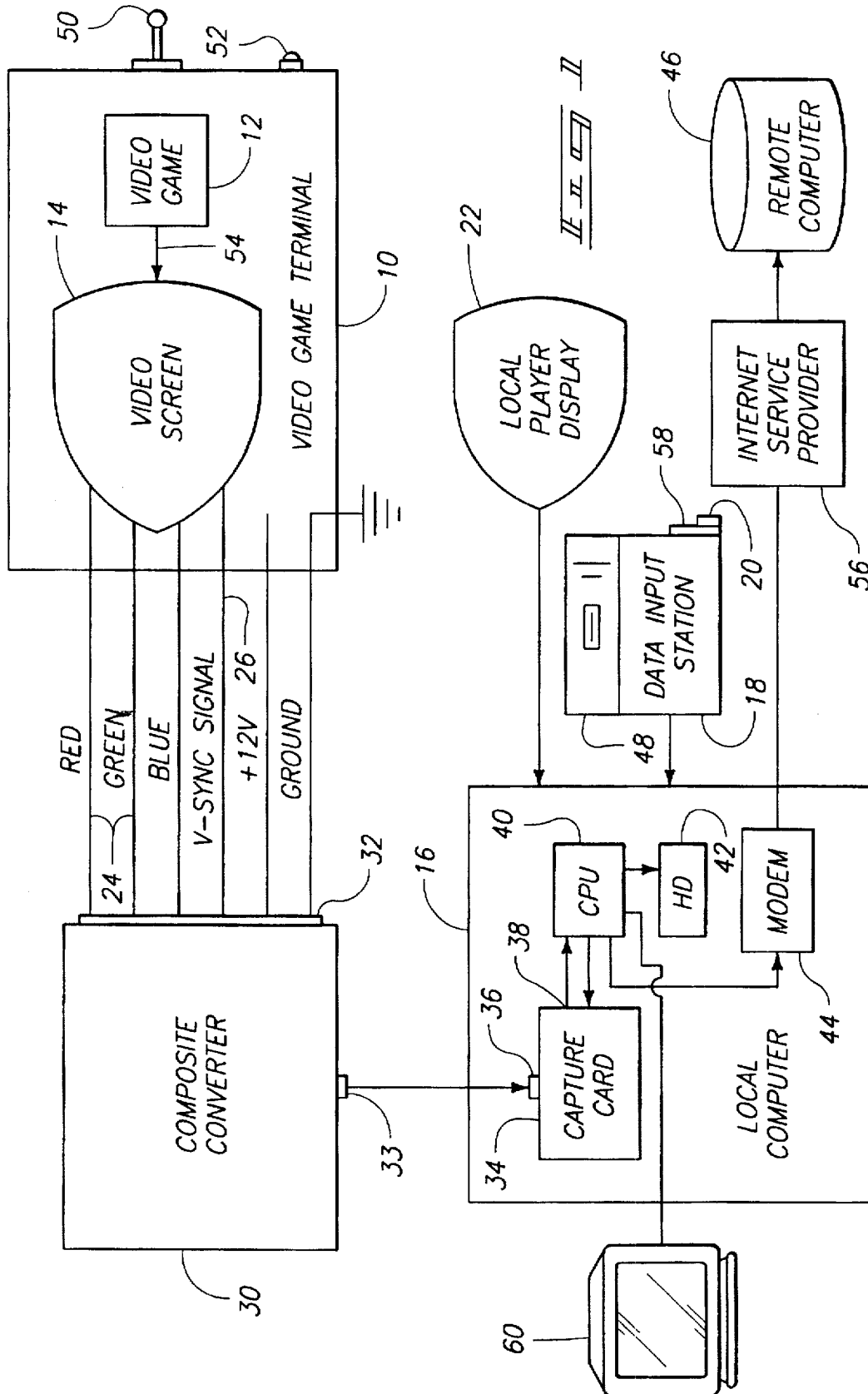
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